



BIRSTALL METHODIST CHURCH

LEICESTERSHIRE

(Registered Charity No: 1128974)

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21



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MINISTER:

Rev Paula Hunt

TRUSTEES AS AT 1st SEPTEMBER 2020

Rev Paula Hunt (Chair)

Mrs Wendy Allan	Mrs Ann Boettcher	Mrs Dorothy Bond
Mrs Janet Bradford	Mr Chris Brice	Mrs Jane Brice
Mrs Jane Corbett	Mrs Mary Downs	Mr Colin Flude
Mrs Shirley Harrison	Mr Charles Hilton	Mr John Kilby
Mrs Alison King	Mrs Marion Liquorish	Mr Tony Moore
Mrs Joan Pearson	Mrs Joan Rumball	Mrs Sylvia Taylor
Mrs Christine Tilford	Mr Richard Tinley	Mr John Towson
Mr Andrew Webster	Mrs Susan Wheeler	Mrs Margaret Young

LOCATION

Birstall lies about 5 miles north of Leicester City centre and is one of six churches which make up the Leicester North Circuit of the Methodist Church of Great Britain.

MISSION

The church continues to be guided by the mission statement formulated by the Leicester North Circuit – *'Deepening Discipleship – Making More Disciples'*.

THE CHURCH FAMILY

Membership

We are an open and inclusive organisation which values everyone who chooses to join us. Membership is open to all who wish to serve Jesus Christ and current membership stands at 111 with many friends who choose to worship with us.

Weekly Worship

Throughout lockdown, the church has held an online service every Sunday morning via Zoom. We have recently been able to welcome people back into the church, wearing masks and seated at an appropriate distance from each other, but have continued to share these services online. Services of Holy Communion were initially suspended, but have also resumed. There is an online Circuit Service every Sunday evening, also on Zoom.

Baptismal Roll

We have two children on the cradle roll, both from the same family. This is due to the fact that all the other children previously on the roll have reached their third birthday. Birthday cards and Christmas cards continue to be sent. On the child's third birthday the Baptismal Secretary includes a leaflet for the Sunday Breakfast Club.

Sunday Breakfast Club

We are now back to meeting most Sundays. Attendance varies from week to week. Some weeks there are no children, but other weeks more than expected.

The Sunday Club have contributed to a number of services at church since the last report.

We are still using the WhatsApp group, as this seems to be a practical way to keep in touch with each other through the week.

School-based work

The Circuit employs a Schools and Community Worker, who is based in Birstall and Rothley. His responsibility in Birstall is to work with young people and local schools. He has engagement with the three schools in Birstall under the administration of the Lionheart Academy Trust (3 primary schools and a secondary school). He has also helped with Religious Study lessons. He has contributed to assemblies and has led workshops in the Primary Schools. He is also involved in working with the local Parish Church to deliver this work including: recording workshops and Easter Experience. Volunteers in this aspect of the work have assisted the worker.

Boys' Brigade

The Boy's Brigade was also closed in March 2020 due to the national lockdown. It successfully re-started in July 2021 once the go ahead was given by the UK government, Boys Brigade and the church. We have continued on a regular basis strictly following best practice and all guidelines sent to us to follow. We have always tried to do activities that promote social distancing. We hope to continue keeping a close eye on preventing any unnecessary risk to any leader or member. The Boy's Brigade currently meets on Fridays between 7 and 8:30pm.

Birstall Methodist Monday Women's Group

The committee have worked hard to make members feel safe & supported during these difficult times. Taking on letter writing, phone calls, cake & chocolate deliveries etc while we cannot meet. We hope to be back together as soon as it is possible to do so safely and look forward, feeling positive, to many future evenings of fun, friendship & fellowship together.

Thursday Group

When Thursday Group had to close, along with everything else, in March 2020, we never realised it would be for so long. As time went on, with repeated lockdowns, it became obvious that we were not going to be able to get together again for some time, especially as all our members are in the retired age group. Groups of us have been able to keep in touch with each other by phone, and help each other by swapping books and jigsaws. A newsletter was delivered to all members by hand in August 2020, and since then a couple of messages have been submitted to the Birstall Post, keeping each other in mind.

We are very hopeful that when restrictions are lifted we are able to resume our meetings in September/October 2021, bearing in mind that we don't meet in July and August, and with Covid conditions still uncertain.

Community Bible Study

This is a significant group within the Church. It not only attracts members of the Methodist Church but its membership includes Christians from other Churches within Birstall and beyond. Under the current restrictions physical meetings have had to stop and we have moved online.

The Pastoral Committee

Wherever possible our pastoral visitors have been keeping in touch by phone, email and spaced doorstep visits during Covid restrictions over the past year. Pastoral visitors are a unique and essential part of the Methodist Church. They try and support the minister in keeping in touch with the church membership, particularly the elderly and infirm.

WORLD SERVICE, MISSION AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

The Lunch Club

Like so many other organisations the pandemic has forced the Lunch Club to close its doors. We have however remained in regular contact with all of our members both by telephone & also by delivering a monthly newsletter. It is intended that the Lunch Club will open again in October 2021.

Weekday Coffee Shop

The weekday Coffee Shop was well supported but has had to close due to the pandemic. It is hoped that it will re-start when conditions allow.

Saturday Coffee Shop

The Saturday Coffee Shop was available for local groups and charities to hire to raise funds for their own group or charity, but also had to close due to the pandemic. The Coffee Shop began trading again in August 2021.

World Church

The total amount raised for World Church in the year 2020-21 was £375.60. Thank you for the ever more vital support for our brothers and sisters in the world through your generous giving to the World Mission Fund.

World Day of Prayer

Our Ecumenical Committee met to make arrangements for World Day of Prayer service that was held on 5th March 2021 and was hosted by St. Teresa's Church. The service is prepared by a different country each year and this year it was Vanuatu. This was on Zoom due to the pandemic.

Special Needs Playgroup

The group had to close due to the pandemic restrictions but re-opened in Spring 2021. One of the three paid workers decided to leave during lockdown. The decision was made not to replace her and keep the number of children low due to covid 19. Currently the group has two paid workers and only eight children. Going forward this is likely to change.

Action for Children

Action for Children is an organisation related to the Methodist Church. The organisation was born in the Methodist Church. Their work is split into three main areas. 1) Best start in life. We know how important the early years are and they are there to help. From parenting advice to education and early intervention, they focus improving children's life chances. 2) Good mental health. Everyone has ups and downs in life. Mental and emotional well-being experts work with families and schools to make sure children and parents feel able to cope with challenges when they arise. 3) A safe and loving home. They make sure more children feel part of a family that cares for them. They find

homes for those without, protect children who have been abused and neglected, and help ensure young carers don't miss out on a childhood themselves.

Fundraising by the Leicester Support Group for the period 1/9/20 to 31/8/21 was very low key due to the pandemic; the Little BIG Band was unable to organise any entertainments for this period of time. This had a devastating effect on our fundraising for Action for Children. Due to the generosity of a number of individual supporters we received donations to the value of £115. However, during this period we were able to send the donations received through the Home Collecting Boxes for the whole of 2020 which amounted to £729. We would like to thank supporters in Birstall Methodist Church and Birstall Village for their ongoing donations during this difficult time.

FINANCE

The closure of the church building from March 2020 meant a major change to the church's income and expenditure. Church staff were furloughed (although that ended in August 2021), collection receipts fell sharply and letting income stopped. Lettings began again (at a much reduced level) in June 2021. We have had a reduction in some costs, such as heating and lighting, but the overall effect has obviously been negative.

From the Annual Accounts, Income and Expenditure as a percentage of totals is as follows:

The break-down of income is:	2019-20	2020-21
Personal Giving	36%	42%
Fund Raising Events	11%	22%
Donations from Church Groups	19%	4%
Other Donations	4%	0%
Lettings	20%	5%
Gift Aid	9%	12%
Other	0%	0%

The breakdown of expenditure is:	2019-20	2020-21
Circuit Share	52%	59%
Caretaking & Security Staff	12%	13%
Premises Expenditure (inc. repairs)	14%	10%
Donations	2%	4%
Heat and Light	9%	4%
Insurances	1%	3%
Other	7%	6%
'Walk in the Light'	4%	0%

The church effectively broke even in 2019/20 with a deficit of a few hundred pounds, while the accounts for 2020/21 saw a deficit of just over £2,000.

Fund Raising

Pre-Covid, fund raising from special events was an essential part of the church's income. A substantial amount, making up the total raised through special events, came from our annual Christmas Festival. Although this could not happen in 2020 it is expected to take place in November 2021. A major fundraising drive took place during Lent 2021 with the challenge of raising up to £2,000 which would be matched by a generous anonymous donor. The drive was well supported and very successful with generous donations from many church members, as well as sales of jam, bird boxes, cakes, books, marmalade and fairy doors. In total over £4,000 was raised, with the match funding taking it to over £6,000.

RESERVES POLICY

1. BACKGROUND

The Birstall Methodist Church requires financial reserves to (i) fulfil its commitment to outreach work, (ii) to fund its regular operating costs and (iii) for repairs and maintenance of the building.

2. OUR RESERVES

Ideally, we aim to hold in reserve sufficient money in our general funds to cover six month's expenditure i.e. £37,000, which is made up of expenditure categories as follows:

- Circuit Assessment
- Staff Wages
- Premises Expenditure
- Heat and Light

In general terms we very rarely achieve this ideal because regular income through Sunday collections, Standing Orders and Letting over a six month period are not sufficient to cover this expenditure, and Lettings income has been much reduced under lockdown restrictions. The Church relies increasingly upon donations from Church Groups and other sources and Fund Raising events to supplement its regular income.

At the end of August 2021 £28,400 was held in the church's reserves.

3. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This Reserves Policy is monitored by the Church Treasurer who will submit a report to the Church Finance & Property Committee at its spring meeting. The Finance & Property Committee will review the Reserves Policy and recommend the changes necessary to the Church Council.

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Table 1

2019-20			2020-21		
55299.9	Income	Opening Balance	53,832.94		
10614.6		Sunday Collections	8,705.01		
15069.2		Standing Orders	16,361.33		
6597.13		Gift Aid	7,198.95		
N/A		Special Services	N/A		
2930.2		Donations From Church Groups	2,300.00		
13273.7		Other Donations and appeals	2,050.38		
7843.88		Fundraising	13,135.80		
13934.20		Lettings	3,072.50		
N/A		Furlough payments from HMRC	6,720.31		
284.62		Interest.	58.62		
		development fund			
70547.5		Total Income	59,602.90		113435.84
	Expenditure				
37686		Circuit Assessment	37,467.30		
8464.01		Staff Wages	8,112.40		
6750.03		Heating Water Light	2,727.62		
		Premises Expenses	418.05		
838.14		Telephone/Internet	662.24		
1527.27		Photocopy/Printing	1,215.09		
		Computer Equipment	0.00		
6160.62		Repairs	4,166.78		
		fundraising costs			
1315.86		Licenses	0.00		
661.4		insurance	2,114.74		
1131.15		Donations	2,294.77		
-691.83		Corrections	0.06		
120.00		ADS Accountants	618.00		
2775		Walk in the Light	0.00		
4076.78		Miscellaneous	2,184.87		
1200		Payment of loan	1,200.00		
		dev fund			
72014.4		Total Expenditure	63,181.92		50253.92
-1466.93		Surplus/Defecit	-3,579.02		
53832.9		Closing Balance	50,253.92		
		Bank Accounts			
6981.6		Barclays	15,659.99		
642.48		NatWest	6,193.81		
46208.9		Central Finance Board	28,400.12		
N/A		TMCP			
		Unreconciled Chq's	403		
53832.9		Total	50,656.92		
Yes		Balance Y/N			
		Funds			
53832.9		General	50,254		
53832.9		Total	50,254		
24945.4	Within these funds Walk of Light Balance of:		22,170		
-45400	Loan from Trinity Church	All Reserves put into General Fund in May 2019	-44,200		

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below*):

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act;
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or

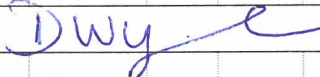
(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply appropriate

(3) I have/have not* obtained independent verification of all investments with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes ("TMCP") or held in other Trusts, Bank balances and Funds at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church ("CFB"), which are individually in excess of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) at the balance sheet date.

* Please circle as appropriate

Name Denise Wynne

Signature 

Relevant Professional qualification or body

Address 46 Highfield Road, Groby, Leicester, LE6 0GU

Date 5/5/22